

MYSTERY TOKENS

By
Ron Benice

Here is the sixth group of tokens whose historical information has eluded me. Readers of Alaskan Token Collector and Polar Numismatist are challenged to come up with information about the owners or businesses that issued these tokens. Most tokens in this group are from Nome, which has a disproportionate number of mystery tokens among the major towns.

Nome

A. & P.: Certainly not from the supermarket chain. Rubles to Statehood says Allen and Pagan in 1917-18 but they were missing from all three directories I had for those years, so I couldn't verify. The source, now deceased, of the attribution proved to have had a bad track record, especially with unverifiable maverick attributions.



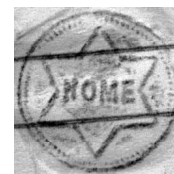
Alaska: These tokens were found in Nome and were good for one lead pencil, certainly an unusual denomination. Can anyone find an old newspaper article, diary entry or comment in any of the books about the early days that refers to the issuer or usage of these tokens?

Café Royal, S. Cohn: An unlisted maverick token attributed to Nome by a collector who is still with us. Despite a business name and an owner's name I couldn't find it. Can anybody find a reference to this place?

Colorado Pharmacy: This token says "Nome" on it and the reverse design is similar to Douglas 25A, Juneau 56D and Nome 8D, so it should be from the early years of Nome. But I could not find when this business operated or who owned it.

Dempsey and Dickey: These two names appear on slot machine tokens of the Nome Novelty Company. Can anyone help put a date on the use of these tokens or give the owners first names?

The token to the right is listed with the Dempsey and Dickey tokens as B-38b. Probably a slot token, this was as good a place as any to place it (rubbing was done on lined paper).



The Gaiety: The issuer of these machine tokens vanished without a trace.

P.H. Harkin: Another unverifiable maverick from the gentleman with a bad track record. Can anyone find a trace of him in Nome?

(continued on page 51)

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Our thanks once again to Ron Benice for his latest installment of Mystery Tokens. Some are not much of a mystery, just trying to date them. Others are very puzzling, like the Alaska lead pencil token. And others seem to be pure speculation. Hopefully, readers will be able to shed some light on these.

The quantity of tokens on eBay recently has been overwhelming. Some rarities have done very well. Some scarce pieces have sold for opening bid, while others have not received any bids. The market continues to be very strong for rarities, while mid-range pieces are hit and miss.

The Alaska lots from our winter auction can be found on the last page of this issue. I must say it is a disappointing selection. We have not purchased anything interesting lately, and only a few consignments came in.

Speaking of our winter auction, winter really has not arrived yet. We are getting into the 40s during the day. Very much like a New England autumn.

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PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

Akiak , Carlsen, \$1, B-1b	1,363.12
Anchorage , Canteen Bar Die , B-10a	60.00RNM
Anchorage , C.B. Die , B-10a	RL213.50RNM
Anchorage , Dairy, 1 pint, B-7a	OB60.00NB
Anchorage , DD Club, B-15aiii	OB150.00NB
Anchorage , Kustatan Pkg., 25¢, B-26c	46.55
Barrow , Tony's, One Cigar, Mint Sport	23.73
Chatanika , Bingle Fritz, 25¢, B-1a	95.00OB
Chatanika , Dempsey Hotel, \$1 B-3c	42.00
Chena , B&K, 12½¢, B-1a, holed	OB90.00NB
Chichagoff , Chich. Club, 5¢, B-1a	4.10
Chisana , Simons, \$1, B-3a	1,103.12
Cleary , W&W, 25¢, B-5a	127.50
Cleary , W&W, 25¢, B-5a	39.00
Circle , Colins & Strait, 10¢, B-1a	203.71
Eek , McIntyre, 50¢, B-1b	46.00
Eielson AFB , Rocker Club, 50¢, B-5a	OB9.99
Flat , Parker, 25¢, B-3a	36.00
Hoonah , H. Pkg. Co., \$1, B-1e	OB45.00NB
Hoonah , Icy Straits, \$1, B-2d	OB49.99NB
Hoonah , Icy Straits, \$1, B-2d	RL45.00OB
Juneau , Alaskan Hotel, 12½¢, B-2b	OB35.00NB
Juneau , Elks Club, 12½¢, B-19bii	53.58
Juneau , Mecca, 6¼¢, B-50b	150.00OB
Ketchikan , The Mint, 12½¢, B-33a	OB25.00NB
Ketchikan , Scandia, 5¢, B-55a	OB90.00NB
Ketchikan , Scoug's, 50¢, B-56c	OB7.00NB
Ketchikan , Scoug's, \$1, B-56d	OB40.00NB
Ketchikan , Stedman, 12½¢, B-60a	OB15.00NB
Klawock , NPT&P, 50¢, B-1a	828.00
Klawock , NPT&P, \$1, B-1b	2,381.12
Kodiak , NOB, B-10b	OB9.99NB
Kukak Bay , Seashore, B-3a	666.03
LaTouche , Little, 12½¢, B-2a	OB250.00NB
Long , Willis, 25¢, B-2a	56.00
McCarthy , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	OB49.00NB
McCarthy , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	RL49.00NB
McCarthy , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	OB49.99
McCarthy , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	OB29.00NB
McCarthy , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	10.49
McCarthy , Johnson Hotel, 12½¢	30.00OB
Mt. Village , Sheppard, B-1 set of 6	80.00OB
Nome , Alaska, 1 Lead Pencil, B-2a	117.77
Nome , Columbia, 1 Drink, B-17a	OB250.00RLNB
Nome , New Lincoln, 50¢, B-36a	21.99OB
Nome , Nome Novelty, 25¢, B-38ai	99.99OB
Nome , NP Bakery, 5¢, B-39a	99.99OB

continued on page 52

MYSTERY TOKENS, CONT.

M. Mulloy: This is another old brass quarter that was probably a slot machine token. These don't say Nome on them but have come out of different sources in Nome over the years, so the attribution is sound. But I couldn't find Mulloy. I guess the gambling halls didn't all make it into Dun and Bradstreet.

Pioneer Drug Co.: Not a maverick. Can anyone find an ad in an old newspaper or magazine to help put a date or owner on this token?

Palmer

"Palmer" tokens with no state name are among the most difficult and controversial to attribute. Alaska is not the only state with a Palmer, Massachusetts having the most significant other Palmer. It is also a common surname, so Palmer on a token may refer to the owner rather than the location.



Palmer Creamery: Can anyone prove this maverick is Alaskan?

Palmer Shrimp Co.: There's a big fight over this one! Two Anchorage collectors insist they saw the company's trucks years ago. TAMS ran this in their maverick column in 1983 and a prominent Washington state collector placed it in Palmer, Washington while an equally prominent Louisiana collector claimed it for Morgan City in his state. My comments: Palmer, Alaska is an unlikely place for a shrimp business. Palmer, Washington is pretty far inland too. I've eaten shrimp in a waterfront restaurant looking out at scores of shrimp boats in Morgan City, Louisiana. But it's nice to know there's a common token that makes collectors in three states happy.

Pastime Club: This cardboard token says Alaska on it. But I couldn't find a date or owner for it. Can you help?

To be continued

“FINE TOKENS FROM YUKON INFANTRY FORCE”

“Among the tokens received on the mail yesterday were souvenirs from Captain and Mrs. Black in the form of bronze goldpans three-quarters of an inch wide, and containing a nugget at the bottom, with the words “Yukon, Canada.” They have a clasp at the back, and are worn by officers and men of the Yukon Infantry Company as distinguishing insignia. Each regent of the Daughters of the Empire and a few others prominent in promoting the patriotic cause received the tokens. Word also was sent that soon a large number of them will arrive in Dawson, and will be offered to the public to help swell the patriotic fund.”

Dawson Daily News, December 22, 1916

We originally ran this news item in the September 1983 issue. It was not until recently that I discovered, while visiting Candy Waugaman's office, that I had been admiring this piece. It has been sitting on her desk for several years, and I just never made the connection.

Well, today, I searched my files for the original article (I had forgotten that I had already used it) to see if this piece might be the one to match the article.

It is not a perfect match. The news item states “three-quarters of an inch wide,” but this one is just over an inch (26.3mm). Mismeasurement? Or perhaps the “large number of them will arrive in Dawson” were a different size. Who can say? Except for size, it matches the description, so I am inclined to believe that this is the piece the news item is referring to.



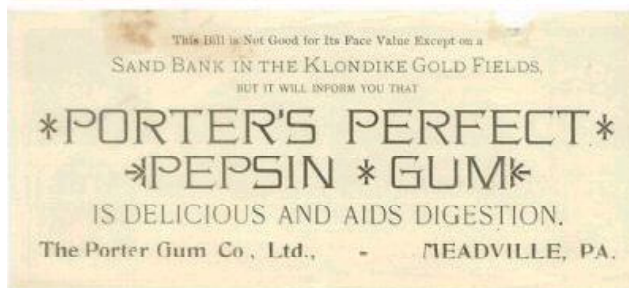
PRICES REALIZED, CONT.

Nome, NP Bakery, 10¢, B-39b	99.99OB
Nome, FN Trans., 1 Fare, B-T1a	20.49
Palmer, ARRC, 5¢, B-1b	34.33
Palmer, ARRC, 10¢, B-1c	34.33
Petersburg, PC&N Pkg., \$1, B-8f	382.77
Port Alexander, Pastime, B-5a	OB30.00NB
Russian River, Henton's, B-1a	38.49
Seward, Northern, 12½¢, B-8bii	34.26
Seward, Palace, 12½¢, B-9c	OB29.99NB
Seward, Seward Bar, 12½¢, B-14a	40.00
Sitka, Witz, 5¢, B-17a	OB40.00NB
Skagway, BoT, 12½¢, B-4d	OB225.00NB
Skagway, BoT, 12½¢, B-4d	OB175.00NB
Skagway, Idaho Saloon, 10¢ B-14a	OB24.99NB
Skagway, Mascotte, 5¢, B-17a	OB45.00NB
Skagway, Mascotte, 5¢, B-17a	82.81
Sparrevohn, 719th, 10¢, B-1c	OB20.00NB
Teller, N.S. Merc., 25¢, B-2a	15.00RLOB
Valdez, CBB, 12½¢ TC, B-4a	61.00
Valdez, Copper Blk, \$1 w/nug, B-4ci	600.00RLOB
Valdez, I&B, no denom., B-9a	OB90.00RLNB
Valdez, I&B, no denom., B-9a	89.88
Valdez, Pioneers of AK, \$20 scrip, B-18c	38.00
Valdez, Valdez Hotel, 6¼¢, B-21a	82.00
Dawson, YT, Dewey & Jensen, 12½¢	125.00BIN
Dawson, YT, Red Feather, 12½¢	231.27
Whitehorse, YT, TDP, 25¢, 50¢, \$1	OB25.00NB
Whitehorse, YT, TDP, \$10	75.00OB
Whitehorse, YT, TDP, \$20	97.01
AYPE Gold, ¼ DWT	152.51
AYPE Gold, ¼ DWT	137.50
AYPE Gold, ¼ DWT	173.50
AYPE Gold, ½ DWT	182.51
AYPE Gold, 1 DWT	201.50
AYPE Gold, 1 DWT	295.00
AYPE Gold set of 3	OB785.00NB
AYPE Gold set of 3	629.00
Greenland, Ivigtut, 10 Ore, zinc	158.05
Tierra del Fuego, Popper, 1 Gram	1207.50
Tierra del Fuego, Popper, 5 Gramos	3737.50
Tierra del Fuego, Spring Hill, 50¢	OB£300.00NB
Tierra del Fuego, 1st & 2nd, 20¢	OB£40.00NB

OB = Opening Bid NB = No Bid RL = relist
RNM = Reserve Not Met R = Reserve
BIN = Buy it now

ANCHORAGE: Area Transit, Inc., 1972, B-T4 a and b. Mintage of 400 each, used approximately six months. (Dave Fronius correspondence).

ANOTHER ADVERTISING NOTE



Another Porter's Perfect Pepsin Gum advertising note appeared on eBay. This time, it used a \$20 Confederate note (the one reported last issue used a \$500 Confederate note).

UNKNOWN CHITINA TOKEN??

In going through my files trying to find something interesting to put in this space, I found a letter from Dave Fronius (deceased December 1982) dated August 1979. In the letter, Dave writes:

"While in Chitina (name) asked if I had ever heard of a 6¼¢ token for "Jack's Place" or "Jack Palmer" "Chitina, Alaska" that an elderly lady had just discovered. (Name) wasn't sure about the name, but it did have "Chitina Alaska" on the obverse and "6¼¢ on the rev. The owner was out of town, but (name) was to send a rubbing as soon as she returned."

I never heard from Dave again concerning this token, so I assume that he heard no more. Has anyone seen this token??

Palmer was one of the owners of the Hotel Chitina, with Thomas Cloninger (Chitina B1a). Benice states that Palmer also owned a saloon in 1914 and the Commercial Hotel in 1915.

Well, I did not follow up on this as it was Dave's "discovery." He passed away three years later, and this is the first time I have happened across this letter. Next time in Chitina, I guess I will have to nose around a bit.

FOR THE RECORD



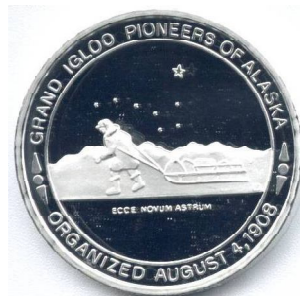
ANCHORAGE: Carpentier Lounge, set of three 32mm plastic tokens: One Can Soda, white on green; one mixed drink, white on black; one pitcher, black on white (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



ANCHORAGE: VFW Post 1685, 75th Anniversary, 2004, good for 2½ drinks (\$10 face value). Brass, 39mm. Only 200 struck (eBay).



BARROW: Tony's Recreation, good for one cigar, aluminum, 20mm. This is a fantasy or **mint sport**. Tony's did not issue a token for a cigar (Kaye Dethridge).



JUNEAU: Pioneers of Alaska, 88th Grand Igloo Convention, 2004. One ounce silver. Depicts Juneau-Douglas bridge on the reverse.



PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERY: 100 Years, 1888 to 1998. Oxidized silver. This is one of the nicest medals we have seen recently (Kaye Dethridge).



JOHN ADAMS/ALASKA: Bronze, 38mm. Now what does John Adams have to do with Alaska?? Made by the Metal Arts Co. This medal is mentioned in "Alaska's Coinage Through the Years," 1965 edition on page 7.

ALASKA: States of the Union, Danbury Mint, 5000 grains of sterling silver. Illustration reduced.



FAIRBANKS COIN CLUB MEDALS

There are a couple items that have not been available for some time listed below. Postage \$3 per order.



Complete set: 1965, 1972-1981 in custom 12 inch by 10 inch Capital Plastic holder -	300.00
1965 Convention silver and bronze set	50.00
1965 Convention bronze	4.50
(1972) Bartlett silver and bronze set	30.00
(1972) Bartlett bronze	4.50
1973 Lathop silver and bronze set	30.00
1975 Wien bronze	7.50
1976 Reeves silver and bronze set	30.00
1976 Reeves bronze	4.50
1977 Creamer silver and bronze set	30.00
1978 Seppala bronze	4.50
1979 Nerland silver and bronze set	30.00
1979 Nerland bronze	4.50
1980 Wickersham silver and unnumbered bronze	35.00
1980 Wickersham bronze, #2!	7.50
1980 Wickersham bronze	4.50
1981 Studdert silver and unnumbered bronze	35.00
1981 Studdert bronze	4.50

KLAWOCK RARITIES ON eBay

Listed but not illustrated in any of the catalogues, the North Pacific Trading & Packing Co. \$1 token is one of the great rarities of Alaska tokens. Our thanks must go to Kaye Dethridge for bringing this piece to market. See the Prices Realize column for the PR.

Interestingly, the \$1 drew out the 50¢ token, and it was also offered on eBay by a different seller. See the PR list on page 50.



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AUCTION: TO BE HELD AT 7:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 13TH IN FAIRBANKS. These are just the Alaskan items. If you want a complete listing, please call or write to the address above. Phone bids may be called in between 10:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Monday to Saturday (noon on the day of the auction). Bids will also be accepted at the e-mail address above.

ALASKANA

ESTIMATE

226	Cordova Token. The Southern Club, 6¼¢ in trade, B-36a. Nice AU with luster.	50.00+
227	Fairbanks Token. Fairview Hotel Pool Room, 25¢ in trade, B-19b, dug and cleaned but all legible. Sad to say, the catalogue value on this token is wrong!	25.00
228	Juneau Tokens. Imperial Cigar Store, 6¼¢ and 12½¢ in trade, B-29 a and b. Both EF or better and showing luster. The 12½¢ token is quite scarce compared to the 6¼¢. Two tokens.	50.00+
229	Koyukuk Tokens. D. Verneti, 12½ and 50¢ and \$1, \$5 and \$10 I/T tokens, B-3, a,c,d,e,f. Five affordable tokens from this tiny village. Missing only the 25¢ for a complete set. Ex our auction 10/14/00, lot #227.	125.00
230	Kwiguk Token. Alstrom, \$10 in trade, B-1f. One of the few fiber tokens issued in Alaska, most likely during World War II. VF or better.	10.00+
231	Noorvik Token. Noorvik Cooperative Store, \$1 in trade, B-1e, EF or better. Large, dollar-sized token.	10.00+
232	Valdez Token. Copper Block Buffet, 12½¢ Trade Check, B-4a, EF, brightly cleaned. Popular native copper token.	35.00
233	Alaska Railroad Medal, 1985. In 1985, the State purchased the Alaska Railroad from the Feds and a medal was struck in gold and silver to commemorate the event. 2,000 numbered silver medals were minted. The medal offered is number 2,000 and was never sold. A neat, historical item.	50.00
234	Official State of Alaska Medals. This lot includes a Proof 1993 Wolf (serial #1237) and a 2002 matte finish crab with a few marks. Both are one ounce pure silver. The Alaska Mint lists the 1993 Wolf at \$300. Two medals.	150.00
235	Proof Alaska Railroad Medals, 1996 and 1997. The Alaska Railroad, in conjunction with the Alaska Mint started issuing annual medals in 1990. The 1996 features a caboose, while the 1997 has an engine with a snowblower. Only 1,500 were authorized for each year and they currently list for \$90 and \$75 at the Alaska Mint. Both of these have their original packaging. These are both 1 oz. pure silver. Two medals.	100.00-165.00
236	Alaska Wildfire Medal, 1996. The current horrible fire season (and summer filled with smoke) brought to mind this medal. Probably the most devastating fire in recent memory occurred in June 1996 in the Big Lake area near Houston, AK. Before anyone could get a handle on it, approximately 200 plus homes, cabins and businesses burned. These 1 troy ounce medals were minted by the Alaska Mint as a fund raiser for fire relief and sold for about \$30. Our estimate	30.00-50.00
237	Official State of Alaska Gold Medal, 2000, 1 troy ounce. This was the year of the fox and only 187 of these were minted. In their last catalogue, the Alaska Mint listed these for \$700. A scarce medal.	550.00-600.00
238	Athabaskan Indian Beaded Wallet. Pale pink, clear and black beads on smoke-tanned moose hide with snap closure. 8.5 inches long (without snap) and 3.5 inches wide. Over 25 years old, exceptional quality and no wear. The maker was from Yukon Territory.	75.00
239	Ivory Jewelry. Here are two items that have long since ceased being made. The first is the politically incorrect "Happy Bears" tie tack (we are blushing as we write this) and the second is a pair of earrings intricately cut as daisies approximately ¾ of an inch in diameter. Retail on these two items was \$43	35.00-45.00
240	Ivory Handled Cake Cutter. Up until the early 1970s, Seattle produced a lot of the Alaskan "art" pieces. Ivory handled knives, etc. were very popular. This ivory handled scrimshawed (dog team) piece is signed "Nuguruk" which is a fictitious name. These old Seattle pieces have become neat collectibles now. In their day, they were extremely popular as up-scale wedding gifts. For further information, Dorothy Jean Ray in her book <u>A Legacy of Arctic Art</u> (available from ARC) thoroughly covers this area. The ivory handle on this piece is four inches long, the whole cake cutter is 10 inches long.	100.00+